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ಇಲಾಖೆ / ವಿಷಯ : DEPARTMENT / SUBJECT: Home - Chikkaballapur blast
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NGT sets up panel to probe Chikkaballapur quarry blast

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
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THE National Green Tribunal (NGT) has constituted a six-member joint committee to probe the Chikkaballapur quarry blast that left six dead in February 22 and submit a report to the tribunal.

The committee will comprise members from the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB); Karnataka State Pollution Control Board (KSPCB); District Magistrate, Chikkaballapur; nominee of Director General, Mines; Chief Controller of Explosives, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Nagpur; and the Director Mines, Karnataka.

An NGT bench, headed by Justice A K Goel, has said the committee members can visit the site - at a quarry in Hirenagara - within a week to conduct the probe into the causes behind the blast and submit the report.

Accept for the visit to the



GELATIN STICKS SEIZED IN ATHANI

Police on Sunday seized gelatin sticks and other explosive material from a field in Telsang village of Athani taluk. Three people have been arrested. Police seized three boxes of gelatin sticks worth ₹75 00, two tractors and a backhoe.

site at least once, the committee will be free to conduct its proceedings online. It can take the assistance of any other expert or organisation. It may suitably interact with the stakeholders and, apart from the present in-

cident, also consider remedial measures to prevent such incidents in the area or by other establishments even beyond the said area," the bench said.

The tribunal has issued notices to CPCB, KSPCB, Director of Mines in Karnataka and the district magistrate of Chikkaballapur, and has stated that the CPCB and KSPCB will act as the nodal agencies for the probe. The bench decided to constitute the committee after taking into cognizance media reports appearing a day after the blast.

The tribunal noted that as per preliminary reports shared by the police, the quarrying had been stopped on February 7 after local residents complained about the rampant use of gelatin sticks. But quarrying continued despite the ban, following which another raid had been conducted and contractors strictly warned against using gelatin sticks.